

Colorado post hits 100 percent membership for 20 years

By Tony DuMosch, adjutant of American Legion Post 15

The mission of The American Legion is more than membership. It's a service we provide. You cannot promote the programs or services of The American Legion within the walls of a brick and mortar building. As a new Legionnaire in 2000, I knew we needed to get out and meet the community.

I attended and graduated from National American Legion College in 2003. On my return to Colorado I brought back the motto of then National Commander John Brieden III: "It's service first, membership second." It wasn't long until members of American Legion Post 15 in Loveland, Colo., saw new faces, new opportunities and donations come into the post.

Members began to get involved in the community, bringing The American Legion to the people. Next came the removal of the word "recruiting" for new members. Rather, the word "awareness" was brought forth. We do not need to recruit members. We have an organization we believe in that has been around more than 100 years. The American Legion has programs and services better than any other organization for everyone in the family. By promoting to the public the information about The American Legion, its service and programs, people became more accepting of the Legionnaires in the funny blue hat. Awareness tables are set up at storefronts, car shows, gun shows, air shows, and other veterans events that take place in the community.

The primary reason why members move on is the three M's: mad, move, mortality. Post 15 members understand it takes active post members who want to get out and promote The American Legion in a fun atmosphere, understanding it takes more than just one person and at best a group of members to address the many issues that have been brought to the tables. The key is patience, know your resources, and never ignore a single person's concern.

In the past 21 years, Post 15 has made its membership goal for 20 of them, with a current all-time high of 452 members – something not seen in 50 years. The key to Post 15's success is to plan at minimum one event each month in the summer, combined with a strong post adjutant use of Legion.org with its tools available through the year. Most importantly, your own trust, belief and faith in The American Legion.